



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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MEXICAN POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED FOR ALIEN SMUGGLING

PHOENIX – Ramon Arath Chavez-Rodriguez, 31, of San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced here on Friday to 12 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Earl H. Carroll. Chavez-Rodriguez had pleaded guilty on October 12, 2005 to Encouraging an Illegal Alien to the Come to the United States. At sentencing, the defendant's sentence was increased due to his abuse of the position of trust held by a police officer.

U.S. Attorney Paul K. Charlton stated that "Public corruption decays our democratic system of government. Those who swear to uphold the law must be held to a higher standard, no matter which side of the border they are from."

At the time of his arrest, Chavez-Rodriguez was a police officer with the San Luis Rio Colorado municipal police force. On June 16, 2005, he approached the San Luis, Ariz. Port of Entry in his unmarked police vehicle with a female passenger in the front seat. Chavez-Rodriguez was not in police uniform, but he presented his valid border crossing card, which displayed him in full police uniform, to the port inspector. He also handed to the port inspector a second border crossing card for a female alien, but with a different image and name than that of his front-seat passenger. The port inspector referred the vehicle to secondary inspection.

The passenger admitted in an interview that she had agreed to pay a third individual \$2,500 for the border crossing card and that the third individual arranged for Chavez-Rodriguez to bring her to the United States. Chavez-Rodriguez admitted that he knew his passenger was an illegal alien and that he expected to be paid for bringing her to the United States.

The investigation in this case was conducted by Customs and Border Protection. The prosecution was handled by Gary M. Restaino, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-644-PHX-EHC
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